MARVEL 4

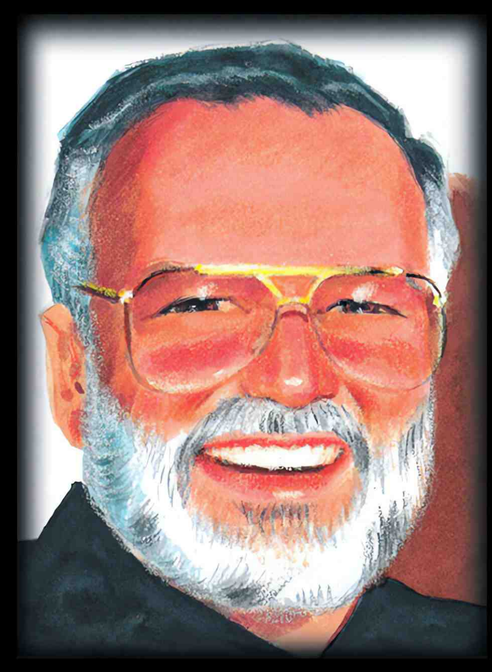
PIRZADA
MORTARINO
TARTAGLIA

CULT OF CARNAGE

MISERY

John Romita

1930 – 2023



Marvel mourns the passing of comic-book artist John Romita Sr., whose work on *Amazing Spider-Man* helped make the character a worldwide sensation. In his work as Marvel's art director, he designed the Punisher and Wolverine and served as mentor for countless artists during his decades-long tenure with the company.

Romita had a profound effect on everyone he met at Marvel. He was always kind and warm and served as an inspiration to all who knew him or followed his work. Romita helped build the Marvel Universe as we know it, and he will be greatly missed.

"John Romita Sr. was an incomparable artist who brought so many iconic Marvel characters to life on the page and set the tone and look of Marvel's comics for decades. His version of Spider-Man has inspired so many of us at Marvel Studios. Our thoughts are with his family and the generations of artists and fans who fell in love with the characters he drew."

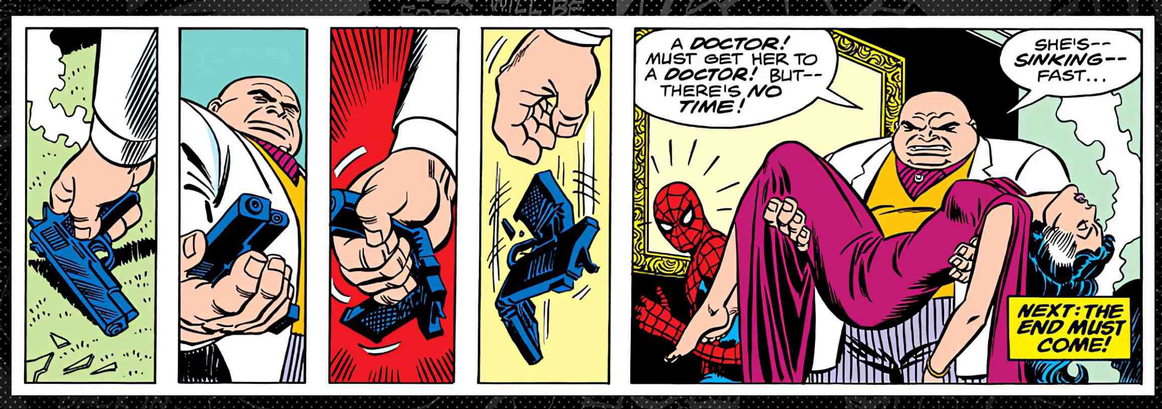
— KEVIN FEIGE

"I was recently able to fawn over some of John Romita Sr.'s original Spider-Man pages, and the word that kept popping into my mind as I marveled over his linework was 'timeless.' His style was such a departure from what had come before, which John did say made him nervous, but one that came to define the look of Peter, Spider-Man, MJ, Gwen and everyone else in their orbit. And the same was true for every Marvel character John designed, penciled and inked. Whether as an artist or art director, John's work influenced generations of comic book artists. With his passing, the comic industry loses a true legend, but just like his artwork, his legacy will remain timeless."

— C.B. CEBULSKI

"When you close your eyes and picture Spider-Man, you're probably picturing a John Romita Sr. Spider-Man. From his debut of the character in *Amazing Spider-Man #39*, the subsequent fifty issues of art, more than a hundred covers and the work he did on the newspaper strip, John defined Spidey for generations of people around the world. That would be enough for anyone else, but John was also an excellent art director, a fantastic father, a doting grandfather and a gentleman. All of us making Spider-Man comics, and Marvel Comics in general, work in his shadow and strive to live up to the example of the legend, Jazzy John Romita."

— NICK LOWE



DECADES OF AMAZING WORK

John Romita wore many hats at Marvel. His most famous contribution was his run on *Amazing Spider-Man*, including the above cover to the series' landmark fiftieth issue. His association with the character would include drawing the cover of the famed wedding of Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson, *Amazing Spider-Man Annual #21*, seen opposite top right. With Stan Lee, he started the Spider-Man newspaper strip, including the sequence with Kingpin from Sept. 25, 1977, seen opposite center. Behind the scenes, Romita was responsible for designing many of Marvel's most famous characters. At bottom opposite are Romita's costume designs for Black Widow and Wolverine.

"One of the highlights of my career was working with John Romita Sr. I couldn't believe that my 25-year-old self was working and interacting with him, and what made it even better was that he was so considerate and kind – something that has stuck with me ever since, among many other memories with him. It was one of the rare moments where you meet one of your heroes and he exceeds your expectations in every possible way.

His contributions to Marvel's pantheon and culture are immense, and he will be sorely missed. He was a great and kind man who truly made the world a better place. My deepest condolences to Virginia, Johnny and the Romita family."

— DAN BUCKLEY

LIZ ALLAN IS THE **C.E.O. OF ALCHEMAX** AND THE WIDOW OF **HARRY OSBORN**. THROUGH A TRAGIC SERIES OF EVENTS INVOLVING SPIDER-MAN, HARRY WAS KILLED. NOW LIZ HAS TO RAISE THEIR SON, **NORMIE**, AND HIS HALF BROTHER, **STANLEY**, ON HER OWN. ALL WHILE RUNNING ALCHEMAX AND OVERSEEING THEIR COVERT EXPERIMENTS ON DANGEROUS PARASITIC ALIENS CALLED **SYMBIOTES**.

RECENTLY, THE SYMBIOTES WERE THE TARGET OF A DARING AND EXPLOSIVE HEIST PERPETRATED BY A DISGRUNTLED FORMER ALCHEMAX EMPLOYEE NAMED **CORWIN JONES**. JONES MADE OFF WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE SYMBIOTE SAMPLES IN ALCHEMAX'S POSSESSION AND GRAVELY WOUNDED LIZ IN THE PROCESS. IN A DESPERATE EFFORT TO SAVE HER LIFE, SHE WAS BONDED TO THE TWO SPECIMENS JONES HADN'T STOLEN: **CARNAGE** AND **ANTI-VENOM**.

WHILE LIZ RECOVERED, JONES WAS BONDED TO ALL OF THE SYMBIOTES HE STOLE, ALL AT ONCE: RIOT, PHAGE, AGONY, LASHER, SCREAM AND TOXIN. TOGETHER, BONDED TO A SINGLE HOST, THE RESULT IS PURE **MADNESS**! MADNESS DEFEATED MISERY, DELIVERING HER TO THE **LIFE FOUNDATION** WHERE NEW HALF-SYMBIOTE, HALF-TECH WARRIORS WERE CREATED—**THE SYMBIOTECHS!**

CULT OF CARNAGE

MISERY

SABIR PIRZADA
WRITER

FRANCESCO MORTARINO
ARTIST

JAVA TARTAGLIA; PROTOBUNKER'S DONO SÁNCHEZ-ALMARA & FER SIFUENTES-SUJO
COLOR ARTISTS

VC'S JOE SABINO
LETTERER

SKAN
COVER ARTIST

STAN LEE, STEVE DITKO, ART SIMEK, GERRY CONWAY, ROSS ANDRU, F. GIACOIA, D. HUNT, P. GOLDBERG, ARTIE SIMEK, LEN WEIN, ROSS ANDRU, FRANK GIACOIA, GLYNIS WEIN, JOHN COSTANZA, JIM MOONEY, TOM DEFALCO, RON FRENZ, BRETT BREEDING, JOHN BEATTY, JOE ROSEN, BOB SHAREN, J.M. DEMATTEIS, SAL BUSCEMA, DAVID MICHELINIE, MARK BAGLEY, RANDY EMBERLIN, DAVE SHARPE, DAN SLOTT, CHRISTOS GAGE, GIUSEPPE CAMUNCOLI, JOHN DELL, TERRY PALLOT, ANTONIO FABELA, CHRIS ELIOPOULOS, MIKE COSTA, GERARDO SANDOVAL, DONO SÁNCHEZ-ALMARA, CLAYTON COWLES
FLASHBACK PANEL ARTISTS

ADAM DEL RE
DESIGNER

LINDSEY COHICK
ASSISTANT EDITOR

TOM GRONEMAN
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

DEVIN LEWIS
EDITOR

C.B. CEBULSKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, FLASH THOMPSON! AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, PETER PARKER PROVED HE HAS ENOUGH COURAGE TO MATCH HIS BRAINS! AND AS FOR YOU, MY DEAR EX-BOY FRIEND, YOU'VE GOT NEITHER!!

HOLY SMOKE! WHA CHANGED LIZ ALLEN? SHE NEVER EVEN KNEW I WAS ALIVE

GOSH, LIZ!! WHAT'RE YOU MAD AT ME FOR??

ATURALLY, WHEN HE STRUCK OUT, HE FIRST STRUCK OUT AT ME...

GLANG!

THE DESK SARGEANT SAYS YOU'RE ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTED ROBBERY--TRYING TO STEAL CERTAIN DRUGS AND CHEMICALS FROM THE HOSPITAL--

--WHICH HAS TO BE ONE OF THE MOST RIDICULOUS THINGS I'VE EVER...

YOU MUST SEE IT. IT'S OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT? SUFFERING BEGETS SUFFERING.

GET THIS JUNK AWAY FROM ME! I'M SICK OF IT, DO YOU HEAR?

MOST OF ALL, I'M SICK OF YOU!

PETER, IT... IT'S TRUE!

YOU'RE KIDDING.

I ONLY WISH I WAS.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, MARK. I... I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU. I ONLY WANT TO HELP, IF I CAN.

COME DOWN WITH ME, MARK. LET US FIND A CURE FOR YOUR CONDITION!

NO! IT'S TOO LATE FOR A CURE--TOO LATE FOR ANYTHING! I'M DYING, AND I KNOW IT--

YEAH, MOMMY--DON'T BE SCARED! IT'S JUST DADDY IN A SILLY HALLOWEEN COSTUME!

I THINK IT'S FUNNY, DON'T YOU, MOMMY? DON'T YOU THINK IT'S FUNNY?

BUT I T WANT DIE LONE!!

I'M THE ONE WHO KILLED HIM, HARRY... JUST AS I SEEM TO DESTROY EVERYTHING I CARE FOR...

EVERYTHING!!

LIZ?

HE'S BEAUTIFUL, LIZ! JUST BEAUTIFUL... AND SO ARE YOU!

OH, HARRY...

SO... AREN'T YOU GOING TO GIVE YOUR LOVING HUBBIE A LITTLE KISS?

YOU WEREN'T LYING TO THE NICE GUARDSMAN, WERE YOU? YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF ME?

AFRAID OF YOU? OF COURSE NOT.

WAIT, LIZ-- COME BACK!

NO, SWEETHEART, NO. I DON'T.

THEN GIVE US A KISS.

THESE WAIVERS, SIGNED BY HIM, PROVE IT. AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR CONTRACT, ALCHEMAX IS SEVERING ALL TIES TO THE JAMESON ADMINISTRATION.

WE'RE DOING ALL IN OUR POWER TO CORRECT THE MAYOR'S TRAGIC MISTAKES. I'LL HAVE ANOTHER STATEMENT WHEN THE CRISIS HAS PASSED. THANK YOU.

SOLD A LIFE-SAVING MEDICINE HOSTAGE FROM US?

DON'T BE THAT WAY, WE HAVE AN ARRANGEMENT.

BESIDES, I ASSUME YOU WANT TO CONFIRM THAT IT WORKS BEFORE I SYNTHESIZE MORE. WHAT ELSE ARE YOU DOING UNTIL THEN?

HUH

BUT YOU COULD HAVE BROKEN THE CYCLE. YOU COULD HAVE LEFT **HARRY OSBORN** ANY NUMBER OF TIMES. HAD YOU DONE SO... PERHAPS LOSING YOU AND **NORMIE** WOULD HAVE SHOCKED HIM OUT OF HIS DOWNWARD SPIRAL.

MAYBE HE WOULD STILL BE ALIVE.

BUT!

THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW, OF COURSE. IT BEGS THE QUESTION, WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST LEAVE HIM?

"SURELY YOU CONSIDERED IT AFTER HE KIDNAPPED YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES."*

"BUT, NO. YOU REMAINED, EVER THE LOYAL WIFE.

*FROM ***SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189.***

"WAS IT ENOUGH, LIZ? TO JUST SIT NEXT TO HIM AND HOLD OUT HOPE THAT HE WOULD SEEK HELP?"

...THE HARRY I LOVED WAS STILL SOMEWHERE IN THERE. I JUST HAD TO BRING HIM BACK OUT.

"OH, YOU WENT FURTHER THAN THAT.

I'VE COME TO YOU **AGAIN** AND AGAIN, LIZ... HOPING THAT YOU'LL OPEN YOUR EYES... BEFORE HARRY DOES SOMETHING THAT WILL HAUNT YOU--FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

GO, MARY JANE! **PLEASE!** JUST GO--AND LEAVE US **ALONE!***

"NO MATTER HOW ANGRY AND VIOLENT HE BECAME, YOU DEFENDED HIM. A LOYAL WIFE, BUT A FAILED ONE.

*SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #200.

"BECAUSE YOU SAW HIM IN A WAY NO ONE ELSE DID. TO NURSE LIZ, HARRY OSBORN WAS A **PATIENT.**

"YOU KNEW SOMETHING WAS CAUSING THE FEVER. THE **GOBLIN SERUM.** BUT WHEN HE REFUSED TREATMENT, YOU SIMPLY LET IT GO.

"LOOKS LIKE YOU FAILED AS A NURSE TOO.

"YOU KNEW MEDICAL EXPERTS, LIKE DR. ZAFAR HAKIM. BUT VISITING AN OLD FLAME TO SHOW HIM HOW FAR YOU'VE FALLEN? YOU COULDN'T DO THAT.

"SO YOU WAITED IT OUT. AND WHEN YOU FINALLY SAW YOUR DEAD HUSBAND...

"...YOU FELT **RELIEF.**

"BUT YOU NEVER REMARRIED, LIZ ALLAN, A BEAUTIFUL AND ELIGIBLE WOMAN WITH SO MUCH TO OFFER.

"AND ASIDE FROM ONE BAD RELATIONSHIP WITH A LAWYER...*

*DAREDEVIL VOL. 2 #8!

"...YOU DECIDED TO BE A SINGLE PARENT AGAIN, CHANNELING YOUR GRIEF IN UNHEALTHY WAYS."**

**FROM SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #14.

YOU CONDEMNED NORMIE TO A LIFE WITHOUT ANY POTENTIAL FATHER FIGURE. WHY?

BECAUSE I...

...I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT I DESERVED.

"PAIN. TORMENT. **MISERY.** IS THAT HOW IT FELT WHEN HARRY CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD?"

AHH! HARRY OSBORN! WHY CAN'T YOU JUST **DIE** LIKE A **NORMAL** PERSON?!*

"AT FIRST, YES."

*FROM **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #581.**

"AND THEN...?"

"I COULD SEE THAT HE WASN'T THE SAME PERSON HE USED TO BE."

"NO, HARRY HAD HIS OWN LIFE. HIS **OWN** COMPLICATED LOVE. **LILY HOLLISTER.**

"THEY EVEN HAD A CHILD TOGETHER. **STANLEY.** LILY WAS OUT OF THE PICTURE SOON AFTER THAT, BUT FOR ONCE IN HIS LIFE, HARRY HAD HIS HEAD ON STRAIGHT..."

...AND THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR LIZ ALLAN IN IT. SO, WHO MADE THE FIRST MOVE?

I DID.

I GUESS, I...I WANTED ANOTHER CHANCE FOR OUR FAMILY.

AH, YES. YOU FAILED AS A WIFE, YOU FAILED AS A NURSE...

"...BUT PERHAPS YOU COULD STILL SUCCEED AS A *MOTHER*.

"THE PROBLEM WAS THAT EVERYWHERE YOU TURNED, YOUR CHILDREN WERE IN DANGER.*

*SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #18.

"IT'S ONLY DUE TO THE HEROICS OF THOSE AROUND YOU THAT YOUR FAMILY ISN'T DEAD.**

"EXCEPT POOR HARRY. HE BIT THE DUST A SECOND TIME, LEAVING YOU A WIDOW TWICE OVER."

HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE IT'S ONE OF YOUR KIDS WHO BITES IT NEXT?

**GOLD GOBLIN #3.

"DANGER, DANGER, EVERYWHERE. WHAT'S A GIRL TO DO?

"WHAT YOU NEEDED WAS A PART OF YOUR LIFE THAT YOU COULD CONTROL.

"ENTER ***ALCHEMAX***. WHERE LIZ ALLAN IS THE BOSS, AND NO ONE CAN TELL HER WHAT TO DO.

"BUT ALAS, YOU'RE FAILING YOUR COMPANY NOW TOO. YOU PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN THE ***SYMBIOTE*** BUSINESS, ONLY TO LOSE THEM.

"THE NURSE.

"THE WIFE.

"THE MOTHER.

"THE C.E.O.

"WHICH IS THE REAL LIZ?

"WHAT DOES IT MATTER? THEY'RE ALL FAILURES.

"THAT'S YOUR ***TRUE*** LEGACY. FOR ALL YOUR HOPES AND DREAMS OF WANTING TO HELP PEOPLE, ALL YOU HAVE TO OFFER THE WORLD IS FAILURE."

UNLESS YOU CONFRONT THE ***TRUTH***.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

"I'M TALKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU'VE BEEN LYING TO YOURSELF FOR A VERY LONG TIME...

"BUT WHAT HAPPENED, HAPPENED.

PROMISE ME YOU WON'T MAKE MY LITTLE BOY INTO A SNIVELING WEAKLING! **PROMISE** ME YOU WON'T MAKE ME ASHAMED OF HIM--*

*AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #369.

WILL YOU STOP **TALKING** TO ME LIKE THAT?!

LIKE...LIKE **WHAT?**

LIKE I'M **WEAK!** LIKE I NEED **CODDLING!****

**SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #200.

"LET'S CALL IT WHAT IT IS. HARRY **ABUSED** YOU."

HE DIDN'T! HE...

YOU NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT IN ORDER TO MOVE PAST IT.

HE DIDN'T MEAN TO. NO. IT WAS THE **DRUGS**. IT WAS...

HARRY ABUSED ME.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

YOU HAVE A CHOICE, LIZ. YOU CAN REMAIN HERE, WALLOWING IN YOUR FAILURES. *MISERY*. OR...

...YOU CAN BECOME THE *MISERY*.

FSSH
HH

HAUH... WHOA...

THAT WAS A TRIP.

WELCOME BACK TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING, LIZ ALLAN.

"WE HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS...

"...AND VERY LITTLE TIME TO DISCUSS IT."

NO ONE'S RESPONDING ON THE COMMS, SPIDER-MAN. THE GUARDSMEN'S LOCATION DATA'S GONE TOO. THAT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN.

SO WE'RE TRAIPSING THROUGH PARTS UNKNOWN LOOKING FOR LIZ ALLAN AND YOUR ENTIRE CREW, ALL OF WHOM ARE MISSING? YEAH, I'D SAY THAT'S LESS THAN IDEAL.

HOW ABOUT THE SHUTTLE? CAN YOU STILL TRACK THAT?

ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, WE SHOULD BE RIGHT ON TOP OF IT.

OH NO...

GUARDSMEN!

WHO THE HELL COULD HAVE DONE THIS?

UNNNGHHH...

SPEARHEAD! THIS ONE'S ALIVE!

WHAT HAPPENED HERE? WHO DID THIS?

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE COME. THEY'RE STILL HERE.

"THEY"?

"HOW ARE YOU FEELING, CORWIN JONES?"

I HAVEN'T HEARD THAT COUGH OF YOURS IN A WHILE.

AAAAAAAAHHH!

ARE WE THE CURE FOR YOUR ILLNESS?

WE CAN CURE YOUR OTHER PROBLEMS, TOO, IF YOU'LL LET US.

IT JUST REQUIRES A LITTLE BIT OF TRUST.

NOT GONNA HAPPEN.

BUT WE'RE ASKING SO NICELY.

AAAAAAAAHHH!

IF THERE WAS JUST ONE OF US, YOU'D HAVE FULL CONTROL.

BUT WE OUTNUMBER YOU, MR. JONES.

AND WE'RE STARTING TO GET ALONG WITH EACH OTHER FAMOUSLY.

MAYBE IT'S TIME WE PILOTED YOU.

AAAAAAAH!

DON'T FORGET--YOU'RE OUR LITTLE PUPPET NOW.

AND WE.

ARE.

THE STRINGS.

MR. JONES?

WE HAVE A SITUATION, SIR.

"IT APPEARS SOMEONE HAS RELEASED LIZ ALLAN."

THE NAME'S MISERY.

AND YOU ARE...?

YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME?

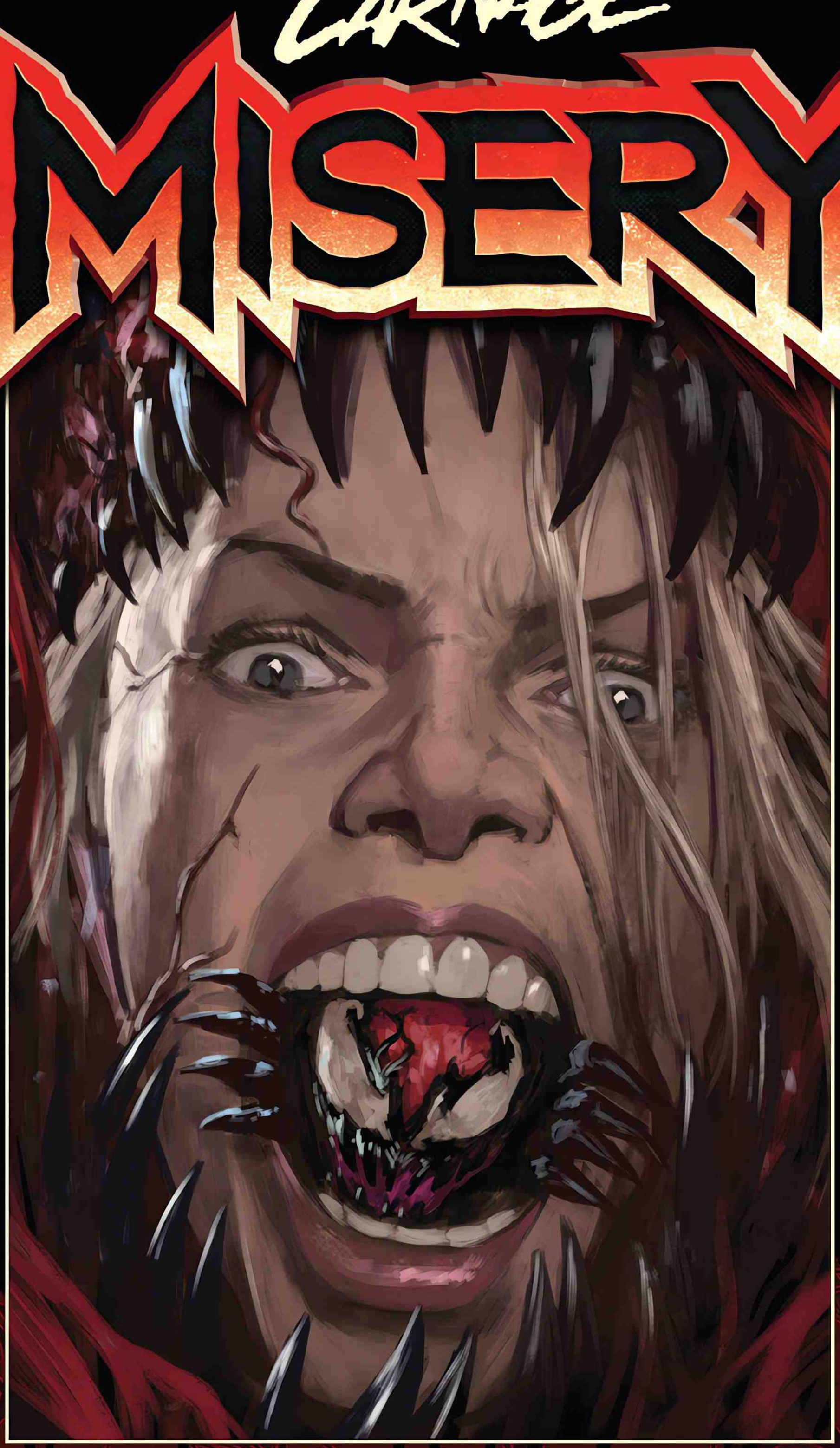
-SIGH-

I SUPPOSE I CAN'T BLAME YOU. I'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT OF CHANGES SINCE THE LAST TIME YOU SAW ME.

I'M STANLEY'S BIOLOGICAL MOTHER. THE NAME'S *LILY HOLLISTER*. BUT YOU CAN CALL ME **QUEEN CAT.**

CULT OF CARNAGE

MISERY



ISSUE #5

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE LATEST SYMBIOTIC SPAWN'S DEBUT?! LET US KNOW AT **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM**!